

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 1869.

Subject: The Hidden Life.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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THE HIDDEN LIFE.

SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 25, 1869.

“AND your life is hid with Christ in God.”—COL. iii. 3.

EVERY one has two lives—the outward and the inward ; and although they are seemingly separate, having a different mode of manifestation, they are at the same time intimately connected. Even rude, undeveloped natures have that which they hide from men. Much goes on within them that does not show itself outwardly. Their cunning purposes, their selfish greed, their lurid and lustful desires—if not shame, then self-interest and safety, lead them to secrete these bad elemental forces ; and so the lowest natures have a hidden life of badness. A great many men are bad outwardly, who are a great deal worse inwardly.

But also when love has purified the soul ; when men have risen through the social affections far above these vulgar conditions, they in like manner have secret lives, but of a different sort. Men revolve ten thousand thoughts which never find expression, and never can. We never can say our best things. We think a great deal better than we ever speak. Fancies thick as stars shine in the vault of souls elected to poetry. Our tender and affectionate natures are like nightingales, and will not sing in glare of day, nor without cover and retirement.

Every person of richness of soul will recognize the truth, that the dearest part of his life—that which seems to him the finest, the noblest, the deepest—never is fully and fairly exposed. And if you think a moment, you are conscious that all those subtlest sentiments, those rarest feelings, which, when they manifest themselves in you with power, give you some sentiment of divinity, are the strains of the soul which you can not speak, and certainly do not. Our feelings toward each other, the feelings that parents have toward their children, orb up and swell the soul, but are unutterable ; and surely, the feelings of affection which great natures have toward each other never find expression in words. There is more in one look that the eye gives, than in what the tongue utters in a lifetime.

There are elements of conscious life that move and control outward action, which lie coiled up like the spring of a watch, in a chamber which is not opened, but out of which issues a power that carries the whole train.

But this hidden life is more strikingly illustrated in the course of all refined affections. Of all feelings, there is none of which men need be so little ashamed as of true love, and none which so much puts on all the appearances of shame. For love is born behind blushing defenses. And after it has won its victories and subdued to itself the whole of life, it then more than ever has in it the necessity of hiding itself. For love, like the blood in the human body, though it be the cause of all the life that appears, is itself hidden within the veins, and never seen.

When the apostle, therefore, speaks of the Christian life as a hidden one, it is neither a paradox nor a mystery, though at first it may strike one as being so. Interpreted by the analogy of the soul's best habits, it is only declaring the Christian's hope to be the secret and spring of all the rest of his life. That which is the strongest in him, that which is the truest to his divine nature, that which he considers the best part of him—in short, that which he will call his real life, is hidden. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

We are to consider that our Lord addressed himself to men's love, and that he still addresses himself to their hearts. He offered and offers all, and he demands all. Though calm, our Saviour was an intense lover. His own need, everlastingly, is to be intensely loved. *With all the heart, mind, soul, and strength*—that is the heavenly love-formula. A passionate love to Christ was practically the whole creed of the primitive church. They thought less than we do, by far, of the Bible; for then only the Old Testament was in their hands, and the New was not written. In the primitive church, there had been drawn out no doctrines. They believed the supreme fact that Christ came, died for our sins, rose again, and ascended up on high. The whole of their belief was comprised in this personal fact. It not only was the whole creed of every primitive Christian, but it is still the whole creed of every deeply spiritual Christian. For love such as the spirit of God inspires is both detersive and curative. It cleanses the soul from gross feelings, on the one side. It creates in it all the fruits which common men seek by the use of reason. He who knows how to love Christ supremely, finds that from that vivid, vitalizing centre spring all precautionary and all formative influences. So that every truly spiritual Christian learns that, however much he may believe of historical Christianity, and however much he may believe of doctrinal Christianity, the operative power in his soul is the personal love which he enthusiastically bears to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The outward life of an ordinary Christian, in times like our own, when government secures order, and opportunity for all good is free and open to all, can not be much distinguished from that of the best moral men, either in liberty or in morality. You can not find a very great difference between the outward and visible life of the best men of the world, and that of ordinary Christians. For, as the idea of seclusion, that notion of past ages, passes away; as a larger and better idea of Christian liberty dawns, and is carried into practice, men are no longer distinguished from their fellow-men by some outward sign—by the clothes they wear; by the way they walk; or by external observances. If there are no other differences between men than these physical differences, that they put on, then these themselves have no justification. If a man is not different from his neighbor in any way that he can show by his life and conduct, and must needs put a feather in his hat to signify that he is a Christian, he would better keep the feather off. It is said that there must be a distinction between Christians and the world; but if there is no other distinction than that, there had better not be that. If there is to be a distinction, it should be in this: that you are more generous; that you are more just. The distinction is to be one of a higher purity, a sweeter love, a nobler manhood; and, if you have not that, you have no right to put a distinction between yourself and another man on the ground that you belong to a church, and he does not. If the only difference between you and him is that you keep Sunday and he does not—that is, that he writes letters and you go to sleep!—it is of no account. If there is no difference between you and other people except that you wear drab, and they wear blue broadcloth, or, that you wear plain caps, and they wear flowers, or *vice versa*, then there might as well be no difference. Any such external badges of distinction are worse than useless. They are deceiving. They are mischievous. There ought to be a difference between men of the world and Christian men. And yet, when the training of Christian families, and the training of Christian institutions has so affected law and public sentiment that men by outside active experience are reared up externally to a high Christian propriety and morality, then ordinary men and Christian men will not have any marked external difference. There will be in the Christian man and the ordinarily high-toned moral citizen the same virtues in business, the same honesty, the same industry, the same alacrity, the same kindliness, the same truthfulness, the same obedience to civic law. There will be no material difference in these respects. Certainly, there will be no discrimination against the Christian life as though it were a less free or a less liberal life. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” And whatever any man on earth who is

not a Christian has a right to do innocently and purely, that, for a higher reason, the Christian man has a right to do, because he stands nearer to God than any body else. That man who has a secret life in Christ Jesus, a true divine life in his soul, has a liberty that no other man has. There is no pleasure which any man has a right to, that I, because I am a Christian, and a Christian minister, have not a better right to than the man who is not a Christian. If it is right for you to laugh, it is right for me to laugh, because I stand nearer to the source of sonship than you do, if you are not a Christian. If it is right for any man to gain honor, or to gain property, it is right for a Christian to do it. If it is right for any body to make his house the very home of refinement, and art, and beauty, and set up a temple of knowledge, wherein to rear domestic virtue and fidelity, it is right for a Christian man to do it. Contrary to the ascetic notion, contrary to the dark notions of a distempered age striving to do right and not knowing how, I affirm that there is no man on earth that has a right to so wide a scope of occupation, that has such a right to days, and years, and powers, and influences, and joys, and ambitions, as a Christian. I have a right to these things because I am God's son, and he owns them, and I am joint-heir with Christ to an inheritance in them all. And I take hold of my own property in these respects.

A Christian, then, has a right to all innocent pleasure, to all industry, to all generous rivalry, and to all modest ambition. A Christian is an actor in the world that now is, in a larger and nobler way than any other one can be. Looking at him only in that which appears, you would not know that there was any difference between him and an ordinary good citizen. The difference, however, is very great, assuming that he is not merely a professed Christian, but a real one. The difference is in that which does not appear. It is in that which lies behind conduct. It is in the hidden life. It is in that which inspires ambition, restrains it, leavens it, guides it. The same conduct precisely may be beauteous as the rose, or may be dark as soot. Precisely the same actions carry different colors. The animating feeling that inspires the conduct, or the act, will determine what is the fragrance and the color, what is the power and the beauty, of the same act as performed by two actors. The ordinary virtues of thousands of men are quite equal to those of Christian men. There are many men who are as honest as they can be; and a Christian can be no honester—I mean in outward matters. There are thousands of men who never indulge their appetites; who never give way to their passions; and a Christian can do no more than that. There are very many men who externally are full as moral as Christians, and in some things more moral. As they attempt to cultivate but two

or three pet moralities, we should expect them to do better by these than a Christian who undertakes to cultivate a hundred. Therefore, when it is said, "That man, who is not a Christian, is a great deal more scrupulous in his word than that man, who is a Christian," it is probably true, to the credit of the man that keeps his word, but not to the discredit of the other man. Let me illustrate this.

If I devote myself wholly to penmanship, and another man divides his time between sword-practice, and equestrian exercise, and painting, and drawing, and sculpture, and architecture; if he undertakes to know and do well something of the whole circle of accomplishments, and I spend the whole force of my life in learning how to write well, at least I ought to do that one thing better than he. I am so poor and scrawny in other respects, where shall I find credit, if this one thing is not done better than other people do it?

There are some men who put the whole force of their life in attempting to be just between man and man. That is the whole extent of their ambition. Some men are scrupulous about their word to the last degree of pharisaism: but in the cultivation of generosity; in the cultivation of kind feelings; in the cultivation of refinements and social amenities; in building up societies for the public benefit; in making laws more lovely as well as more protective; in the culture of spiritual elements by which God and the human soul are brought near together—there they do nothing. All the vast outlying departments of manhood are abandoned by them, and left to become an overgrown wilderness. There are men that own a thousand acres of land—in their soul—and have but a quarter of an acre of it under cultivation. They make a garden of that, and all the rest is a wilderness. By devoting himself entirely to that quarter of an acre, a man is able to keep it in excellent condition; and he says, comparing himself with his neighbor, "I am better than that man." *That man* has cleared five hundred acres, and has it under fence and cultivation. He can not give it that special care that the other man does his quarter of an acre; but which would you pick out, the man that takes care of five hundred acres well, or the man that expends every thing he has in taking care of a quarter of an acre?

There are men over in New-York who think they are a great deal better than Christians. Why? Because there is one single thing on which they have spent their whole life, and the doing which is a part of their life. In that they do see that they are a little ahead of other people; and therefore they think they are better than any body else.

Here is a cutler. Around his shop you shall see all manner of exquisite implements. There are whole cases of surgical tools, shoemakers' tools, and cabinet-makers' tools. Whatever you want in the

shape of cutting-instruments, you can find in that man's shop. See the scissors and shears and knives, of all patterns, and of the most beautiful workmanship! And the man takes a just pride in these things, and says, "Considering how many I have to look after, I am proud of them." But a man comes in, and says, "Oh! that is very well, but I have made a pin! Just look at that pin! Take a microscope and examine it. You have not among all your tools there a thing that is to be compared with that pin!" He spent, he says, five years in making that pin! What is a man worth that spends five years in making a pin, when it is nothing but a pin after it is made?

So there are many men who compare themselves with Christians. You shall often hear a man that is not a professed Christian say of one that is, "He did a thing that I should disdain to do." Perhaps it is a thing that lies just along that line where you have spent your life-force in developing one single grace and morality, while this other man has cultivated ten times as many graces and moralities as you have. He does not carry his so high as you do yours; but he a thousand times more than makes up what he lacks in one direction by the breadth of what he is attempting to do in others.

A man that is living in this world is not living just to keep this law, or that. Every man that lives in this world is a builder. He is building a character in his soul. And that character is to outlast the globe and the sun. He is building himself for the eternal world. And it will not do for a man, in building a house, to spend all his time on one brick or stone. He must carry up every part of the house, or he is not a good builder.

I say, then, whether you regard the diversity of men's liberty in the things that they may do; whether you consider their freedom, under God's natural law, in taking hold of every proper thing; or whether you regard the mere external moralities of men, there seems to be no very great distinction between the best specimens of secular men, and the ordinary specimens of Christian men. But there is a difference. That difference lies, as I have intimated, in the animating centre of the different lives. Take two men who are substantially alike to the outward eye. If you could look in and see what are the powers that are turning the machinery of the soul, you would see that they are essentially different. The differences are such as are to be revealed in the eternal world. I will illustrate it in a way that you can not misunderstand.

Here are two men in New-York doing business. They are alike. They stand alike. They are both said to be "A, No. 1." They are both spoken of as thrifty men. Both of them are making money. They are making it by enterprises large and successful. Both of them are sagacious. They both know how to administer what they

make. It is harder to save what you get, you know, than it is to get it. As, frequently, when men fish with several hooks, more fish bite than they know how to land, so it is in making money. Men often make more money than they know how to keep. But these men know both how to get money, and how to keep what they get, and how to administer it wisely. And to just stand at the head of Wall street and look down upon them, you would say that they were about the same men; that they were about of the same age—forty-five; and that one was about as good as the other.

But are they the same? Let us look and see what they are made up of. The first man came down to New-York and said, "I have one sovereign purpose. By the help of the Lord, or by the help of—any other power, I am determined that I will have money. I am going to have money at all hazards. It is not best for me to say it out, for that would not be *respectable*; but I love money, and I am going to have it." He thinks of money all day, and he dreams of it all night. He thinks and dreams, not about any thing that he is going to do with the money, but about the money itself. When he has made his five thousand dollars, he feels that this is only yeast; and he says, "I have got this; and now it shall be my fault if I do not double it before the year rolls round;" and he doubles it. And when he has his ten thousand dollars, he says, "In less than six months I will double that;" and he doubles it. And so he goes on, his supreme purpose being to accumulate money. It is money that occupies his thoughts continually. He thinks about it in the morning as he goes to his business, and thinks of it at night, when he returns from his business. With him it is money, *money*, MONEY! And if he has any other chance thoughts, they are such as this: "I wonder why God did not make the days thirty-six hours long, instead of twenty-four, that I might work longer!" He has not time enough to make all the money he wants. So by the time he is forty-five years of age, the passion for money has grown so strong that he sees gold everywhere. He sees gold and silver in the heavens—gold by day, and silver by night. If he reads the Bible, he likes to read of that city which is paved with gold. All his ideas run on gold. He is a supreme miser. He knows all of that side of morality which will enable him to get gold and keep it; and that is the whole of what he does know.

The other man, who outwardly seems just like him, is a man that was himself poor. And, loving a most worthy mate, and marrying early, out of poverty; and being blessed, as love should always be blessed, with affluence—at least of children—the family is large; and he says, "I can not, now that I see what happiness may be given through the outward power of wealth, be content without it. This

woman shall not be a drudge, if it is in my power to prevent it. And these children—I will not bring them up as if they were moles under the turf. They shall have whatever intelligence, refinement, and moral excellence can give them.” And, going to his store in the morning, after kissing his wife, and kissing his children, every one, though they have some of them now come to be bearded, he thinks, “It is not I. There are ten mouths as well as my own.” And every time he puts out his hand and gets a dollar, that dollar strikes the nerve that runs back to the mother of his children, and to each one of the children. And there is not a bargain that brings in an unexpected thousand dollars, that he does not say, “Good for them!” And all the while, night and day, he is thinking or dreaming of them. And when there comes one of those sudden tornadoes—for you know that, in the natural climate, tornadoes sweep over the equator; and in commerce the equator runs right through New-York City, and through the Gold-Room (I stood there on the equator, yesterday!)—when there comes one of those sudden tornadoes, and the clouds are black, and the winds roar, and ships and houses are being upset as in a moment, and all the man’s possessions are, as it were, at the mercy of the raging elements, what are his thoughts, as he goes back home with a heavy heart? “Why,” he says, “if I were a young man, and alone, I would not turn my hand over to save any thing. I do not care for myself. But oh! I can not bear to see my wife and children reduced to want.” And he goes to his room, and says, “Great God! *great God!* help me!” And what is the anguish and agony of his prayer, but the love which he bears to those that are more to him than life, or any thing else?

Here are these two men, making money. They are both forty-five years of age, and they seem alike. There is no apparent difference between them. They are both moral and respectable, and are both received into society. But one has been acting, all his life long, from avarice, and the other from love. And does not the hidden life make any difference between the one and the other?

I have said that there is no visible distinction between the best secular man and the ordinary Christian man; but when you go to the inside, and look at the motives that are animating the one and the other, while making the same pilgrimage, and striving for the same ends, is there not a great difference between them? Is not one stimulated by the love of Christ and the hope of immortality, while the other is actuated by mere worldly motives of morality?

Two persons may be equal in outward fidelity to duty, and yet different in their interior lives. Though their external circumstances are the same, and they appear to be passing through about the same experience, if you go down to the bottom of their inward nature,

though you may respect them both, you can not help seeing that they are different, and that it is the hidden life that determines, after all.

In this great whirligig of a world, there is nothing stranger than the mating and mismating of men and women. There is no question that is more insoluble, and more often asked, than this, "What on earth ever tempted that woman to marry that man?" You can not answer it, I can not, and she can not. There is but one other question like it, and that is, "What on earth tempted that man to marry such a woman?" He can not tell, and she can not, and nobody can. So it is, and so it will be, all the time, here, and there, and everywhere. And, while there are some who, disappointed, rebound and break away into immoralities, or into an indifference which is an immorality in the realm of love, there are others, of a greater soul, who give their whole life to fidelities in their relation. They know that they do not love. They know that there is that in them which is capable of development, but which they have never known. There are prophecies in themselves, which they do not want to awaken, of what their soul is capable of. If they read a book where the heroism of love is described, they shut the book, and tears flow from their eyes, and they say, "Oh! what might have been." But that is not safe, and they banish it, and go on in the usual way. Early and late they are faithful.

Look at this wife and mother. See how she watches over others' interests. There is no duty neglected or left unperformed. The household is well ordered. The children are well reared. Apparently, life passes in that family about as well as in any other. But if you look into that woman's heart, you shall see that she has laid up the best part of her love. Her love has had no chance to manifest itself on earth. And yet, she has done her duty. She has been a noble woman, a true wife, and a faithful mother. In her children she has doubtless found a natural outlet for her affection; but sometimes the children themselves are frivolous, and thin, and poor. Even they sometimes bitterly disappoint her. And yet she is true.

Right over against her is another like her; but fortune has favored her—God, who is fortune; and to her was given one that not only was her equal, but rose above her. She grew in him as a sweet and fragrant flower grows in the side of a great hill, that is its shelter and nourishment. And all her life was a beauteous life. It ran like a rill down the hillside, and sang all the time. It was like flowers that know no summer and no winter.

Looked at outwardly, these two women's lives seem alike. People seeing them in the realm of duty in the household, would say that they were alike. But when you go to the bottom, *are* they

alike? Is it not true that there is a hidden life? Is it not true that it is the supremest affection, the enthusiasm of the heart, that determines what the life is?

I hold, then, that the difference between a true Christian and other men is not an outward one, so that you can distinguish him from them, as you would distinguish a black swan from a white one, but that it is a difference which God sees at the bottom of the soul—the secret and hidden life. Such is the difference between ordinary Christians and the best specimens of the world.

I have alluded to the ideal manhood which every true Christian must needs have. There comes up in every one that is intelligently educated in the Lord Jesus Christ's truth, a sense of something larger and nobler than that which is required of a man by the public sentiment of this life. "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?" If you are no better than the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of God. A man who is a Christian feels that he is bound not only to be as good as his fellow-men, but in some respects transcendently better; and that *better* lies in the inward sense that he has of manhood. There rises up before men a sense of honor, a sense of being, a sense of beauty, a sense of symmetry in themselves, that abides with them, and would, though there were no outward manifestations of it. Persons in whom the love of praise is inordinate, and who can scarcely detach the idea of noble character from the idea of praise for that noble character—such persons, when under the predominant influence of the divine mind, come to be quite independent of the inspection of any human being, and to be dependent only on the inspection of God himself. It is a character which, for depth, for width, for variety, for strength, for purity, for sweetness of blossom and for abundance of fruit, is not required in this world. Nay, it is hardly attainable here.

I think the most affecting parts of life are those secret struggles that men make toward an ideal manhood. It is a noble thing for a man to strive, not only for an outward end and aim, but also for an inward manhood: not because society demands it—he already pleases and satisfies society; not because the church demands it—he is already a reputable member in the church; but because there is something which demands that he should be larger and nobler and better than either society or the external church demands him to be; for the sake of himself, and for the sake of God and Christ Jesus. There are no more affecting lives than these lives of yearning, of aspiration, of resolution, and of endeavor. And there are no more affecting passages in human life than these unexpressed, silent inward strivings. Not the battles that roar with mighty artillery are the most important. The battles in which

thoughts are the only swords, and purposes are the only spears, and tears are the only shots—the inward struggles of men's souls—these are, after all, the mightiest battles; and in the sight of God they are the most sublime. There is many a man that gives no outward indication of being much of a man, whose soul, God, looking upon him, sees to be a great sphere. In estimating men we must reject the sensuous measure, and drop from our minds the idea of magnitude.

If you saw a man as great as Shakespeare, or as great as Goethe, undergoing mighty struggles, you would have sympathy for him; but if it was a poor cobbler on the bench, or a pauper, that was undergoing struggles, you would rather smile in pity, and pass by. Not so God. His sympathy does not depend upon how large a man is, or how richly he is endowed with the original forces of the mind. It is the soul protesting against the bondage of this world, and refusing to be trampled upon; it is the Son of God that is in every one of us, calling out for its own rights, and asking to be set free, that has the divine sympathy. There is a moral sublimity inhering in the quality itself, quite independent of the power and magnitude by which that quality is being exercised. And it is found among the lowest and poorest, as well as among the highest and richest.

There are thousands who never speak in meeting, who never have their lives written for a Sunday-school library, and who are untrumpeted in this world, but who have wonderful experiences. They do not understand them. They can not give an explanation of that strange and witching turmoil which at times comes into their souls. Persons that are wonderfully stirred up by the morning twilight, and by the evening twilight, and that do not know what ails them; persons whom the far-sounding bell sets astir inwardly, and who do not know what ails them; persons who are susceptible to the poetic and artistic influences in society, and do not know what ails them—God sees these persons, and sees their inward and hidden life; and he knows that though they are ignorant, and do not know how to marshal their forces, they are striking for independence, and calling out for a higher and truer spiritual life. And his sympathies are with all who are struggling to rise from a lower to a higher manhood—and as much with those who are undeveloped as with those who are developed. But it is not so with us. We do not feel on seeing a grown up man suffer, as we do on seeing a child suffer, that does not know how to use words even, and turns its misty eye to the father and mother with a grief-full look, because they do not relieve it. We can not tell why, but we sympathize with and pity the grown-up man as we do not the child. I am more touched by the suffering of these unknowing souls than I am by the suffering of the intelligent, educated, self-

analyzing, comprehending souls; yet there is something very sublime and noble in the endeavors of men that have become good, to become better. The strife from bad to good is but a single step. Then comes the next strife, from good to better. Then comes the next strife, from better to still better. And as you go up the line of development, every step is steeper, and every achievement harder to be won. And the nearer you come to perfect manhood, the more you have to contest and suffer for every thing that you get. And the sufferings of sensitive natures, who are the admiration of men for their excellence, because they are not as excellent as the law of God in their own imagination requires, are written in the book of God's remembrance in heaven, though they are unknown on earth.

There is belonging to this hidden life the soul's familiar intercourse with Christ. This is the sweeter part of it. There is such a thing as talking with God. It is said, in that venerable old record, that *in the cool of the day God walked in the garden, and called to Adam*. I know one thing—that that same habit has continued to this day; for I have, “in the cool of the day,” on the hillside, a hundred times, walked with him too. God is accustomed to come down. He makes himself, by the power of the Holy Ghost, a guest, and he abides in the souls of those who know how to accept him. There is such a thing as communion with Christ, as one speaketh to a friend, face to face. There is a banqueting-house where he sits down with those who are his disciples. He is with them in their solitary hours—not necessarily hours of the closet, but hours of trouble as well. In the solitude of Western forests, I have lifted psalms and hymns to God, and have had communion with him such as I never had in the sanctuary. There is many a man on the lonely watch at sea; there is many a solitary watcher on the land; there is many a one in the recesses of business; there is many a one in the toil and fatigue and vexation of the week-day or in the broad calm of the Sabbath, that has this soul-communion with Christ. It is the banquet of love. What words can describe it? It is ineffable. It is full of glory—at times, of inexpressible glory.

This hidden life no man can see. Yet what better evidence could there be of its existence than the testimony, “I have been extremely happy in meeting with my Saviour”? All those glancing thoughts; all those gratitudes; all that sense of yearning; all that lifting up of every thing in the soul that is unanalyzed and undefinable; all that rising up of the spiritual nature under the strong drawings of God's very presence; all that peace which *passeth understanding*, and which God knows how to rain down into the soul when he comes near, and puts his arms about you, and takes you into his very bosom, so that you can look up and say, in that rapturous moment,

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and, There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee"—these are parts of that hidden life. And it may well be called a *life*, though it be hidden. And though outward praying, and much that goes to make devotional exercise, may seem to be mechanical, and is, it does not alter the fact that there is this secret, deep, blessed inward life. And they are indeed poor followers of Christ who have never had those joyful experiences which proceed from the hidden life. That is a poor road for a man to travel in which he can not find a sunny spot in winter, or a shady spot in summer, where he may sit down and eat his food. That must be a savage country in which there are no resting-places. The soul's resting-places in this world are many. Yea, it must needs be that there are many, when even a pile of stones is a pillar good enough for a child of God, sleeping thereon, to see angels ascending and descending between him and heaven.

Not to open this further, I remark, in closing,

First, that the morality of a man, and his whole external life, is his poorest part, if he is a true man. That which you carry outwardly bears no comparison to that which you carry inwardly, if you are a true man. You know very well that this is so in your family. You know that you are misjudged if any body thinks that you are, as a father and a husband, only what you show yourself to be in the street. If a man goes into company, there is that in him which shuts him up. And when he comes into the household among his most familiar friends, he can not say his dearest things. Nay, when only you and your companion are together, you can not say the things which are the most divine in you. It is only when the favoring hour comes, at last, and you are helped by circumstances, that, in some whispered word, in some glancing moment, you say things that, like seals, make their pictures on the memory forever.

And as it is in the household, so it is in your whole life. That part of your life which you can use outside is not the best, nor the richest, nor the truest part of it. The things which are seen partake of the imperfection of sense and matter. The invisible life of every true man—that which he is back of his conduct, and words, and gestures, and postures, and demeanor; that which he is as God sees him in the secret silence of his own closet-self—that is the true man, and ought to be better than any other part. It is said of a man, frequently, "He is better than he seems." It is a poor man that is not better than he seems. There are many men who are worse than they seem—that is so; and there are many men who are better than they seem—that is so, too, thanks be to God. There are many men who do not know how to take the good that is in them and organize it outside. There are many men who, though they are weak in the

flesh, yet have, relatively, a great deal of power in the intellect and spirit. There are many men who know how to be better men in their thoughts than in their actions. There are many men who out of temptation come to equipoise, but who in temptation have not that equipoise. Christ knows it; and he pities a great many men, and will do justice to a great many men, whom we tread under our feet. Just as you are, you ought to be more just. Kind as you are, you ought to be kinder. True as you are, you ought to be truer. Generous as you are, outwardly, there ought to be a fountain in you that is more nobly full of generosity.

Do you know what I think is a mean man? A man that is afraid not to do a good thing, and then is sorry because he has done it—that I call a mean man: a man who—after he has given money to some benevolent object, says to a friend, “I was in a corner, and had to give that twenty-five dollars.” You were a fool to give twenty-five dollars when you did not want to; and having given it, it is mean for you to say, “I suppose it is all right; but I did not want to give that twenty-five dollars. It was for some poor widow, I believe, or something of that sort.” Could any body but a mean man do that? Your circumstances were so much better than your disposition that you were brought where you really did a thing that was worthy of your truer and better nature, and worthy of your hopes for the life to come; but the doing of the thing was not sweet enough to keep you to the flavor, and you spit it out, and went away mourning over it—feeling sorry that you did it! What can you make of such a man as that—a man that does good by accident, and then repents of it?

There are many men who are far better than their reputations. There are many men who have the reputation of being stingy and cruel, and who will wring your neck in a strife or an emergency; but who, at another time, and when they are in a different vein, would sit by you night and day, and would not spare their bodies nor their wealth in ministering to you. They would kill you on one side, and save you on the other.

There are many men who are better than they seem; but all men ought to be. When you have done your best; when you have brought yourself up to such a degree of excellence that you are praised and patted, and called amiable, and generous, and refined, and symmetrical, and saintly, and you overhear such whisperings about your virtues that you are tempted to think that you are almost a bird of paradise—even then, you ought to be black as a crow outside, compared with what you are inside! For, after all, that man’s inside must be very low who can get his outside nearly up to it. If a man, dragging this clumsy body, can perform about as well as his

thoughts and feelings can plan, what must those thoughts and feelings be? He who comes near his ideal has his ideal very low. But that man who is manfully and continuously working to carry up the outside, and who still sees his ideal above his performance, and rising as fast as he rises, ought to be happy—especially if he feels unhappy! Blessed is the man who is never contented with his conduct. Blessed is the man who is never without some pain in the soul. Blessed is the man who sees that there are infinite heights beyond him. But woe be to the man who, in this sphere, and in his present circumstances, says, “I am good enough.” He is scarcely worthy of being called a shuck or a cob. He certainly is not fit to be called the grain or the bread.

I wish to make one application on the subject of the beauty of our outward lives and the beauty of our occupations; because the grace, the richness, the significance of our outward lives is derived from what we put into them by our inward lives, as I have already intimated. Our outward lives are discriminated one from another by the qualities which animate the one and the other. But there are a great many men who are called to homely lives. And it is in the power of a man, out of his soul, to make a homely thing handsome. It is in the power of a man, by the cheerfulness of his disposition, to lift himself up in a given pursuit so that any body who engages in that pursuit shall be able to make it finer and nobler. (Well, I do not yet hit what I am after!) Why do you want to go to college? You say, “Because that is the way to be successful in life.” That is a motive good enough so far as it goes. But I want you to go to college, not because you are going to be a lawyer, or doctor, or minister, or teacher, or professor, but because it will make more of you. A man ought to want a good education because he wants to be more of a man, and ought to want to go to college because it will augment his manhood. If I had a son who was going to plow all the days of his life, I should say that he ought to be educated in order to be a good plowman. You are going to be a man; and your manhood ought not to be according to the measure of your occupation, but larger than that. And in every single pursuit that a man undertakes, this inward quality, this hidden life, ought to go through it, and make it essentially noble. If a man is going to be a musician, why is he going to be one? Is it that he may touch ecstasically all the various notes? Is it that he may make the groundlings gape? Is it that he may make the money chink in his pockets? These, as incidental, collateral, and coördinate motives, are not to be reprovèd. But a nobler view is this: “I am called to music, and that is to be the means by which whatever is beautiful and true in me is to express itself to men; and I take it as my instrument.”

Why do I speak to you as a preacher, from Sunday to Sunday? God knows it is because I have things which I think will make you better, and not because I want your admiration, though I like that too, as it comes in without my seeking it. And I like your sympathy and your love. For I am a man of like passions with yourselves—no worse in some things, and no better in some things—as good as the average, I hope. But I hold that God gave me speaking power, and gave me a sense of what manhood is; and what I long for is, to see better men and better women in communities and families. And I love my country and the world, and labor by all that is in me to make men ambitious of good things, to make the light of genius flash across homely ways, and make fewer tears and more smiles, and make fewer bad men and more good men.

And I say that, if I were a violinist, I ought to have the same spirit. If I am called to be a fiddler, I am ordained of God to make mankind lift up their heads; and if I do that, I must have something in me. But what is a fiddler worth, who is all dried up at heart, and is no bigger than a pin, and who thinks it his duty to scrape his catgut from morning till night, and has no higher ideal than that? A fool could do it as well as he. But if a man is only a player of the fiddle, and God has inspired his soul, and Christ has baptized him into a new life, and has given him yearnings and aspirations for things noble and true, he can serve God and his fellow-men by that instrument. There is something for all to do, but by different instruments—one by his organ; another by his piano; another by his paint-brush; another by his sculptor's chisel; another by his plow; another by his carpenter's tools; another by his trowel—every man by that to which he is called in the providence of God, that he may give some expression to the inwardness that is waked up in him. There are rude workmen who have, back of their hand, back of their skill, a soul that is trying to express itself in the realities of life. This is the ordination which makes true manhood and true genius.

And this is the great reason why men are so shallow. Why, the pictures that I see are so thin that a fly could wade across them and not get drowned! A million pictures are not thick enough to take one in knee-deep! The trouble is, that the painter has nothing in him—or nothing but paint. He is simply a portrait-painter—or merely a Chinese dauber. Some outward things he sees that will sell, and he puts them on canvas. *It was wood; it is paint; and a fool prepares it for the market!*

But if a man is endowed of God to see that every thing in nature carries lights, and that every thing in nature has symbols, indications, hints; and if, seeing better than other men, and feeling deeper than they, he can take his brush and seize the most significant thing, and

represent it in such ways that when other men see it they say, "Why did not I see that before?" (though they can not tell what they do see now!) he is a real artist. The smallest thing done by a man who has true genius is important; and the extent to which such a man can elevate and benefit his fellow-men, depends upon the amount of inwardness that he has. That is the reservoir of the soul. And it is its depth; it is the power of its contents; it is the struggling manhood which Christ has awakened, which the Holy Spirit inspires, and which God is carrying up to himself—it is this that is to stand behind every speaker, every artist, every worker. You are all *workers together with God*, whether you hold the rudder, or handle the chisel, or steer the state—whatever you do; and you are workers for the same great end—the renovation of man, and the rebuilding of the globe, until it shines in its perfect newness, and heaven and earth are one.

How blessed is this inward life, by which a man's soul is a fountain out of which come the issues of life! how noble! and how hard to be attained! But when it is reached, how it is worth every struggle, and every tear, and every aspiration, and all the gropings, and stumblings, and downfalls, and every stroke and wound, by which at last the victory came! And yet how many are striving to make themselves happy in the world's way! O fools! O crowds of fools! O innumerable myriad fools! that are trying to be happy by the outside, though the world has shown you over and over again, in its tears, and groans, and pains, that there is no such thing as being happy in that way, and though Christ has deigned to reach over and say to you, "A man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesseth!" You have tried it all the way up, only to find that you are never so happy as you expected to be. You said, as you were nearing manhood, "If, when I am twenty-one years old, things can be so and so, I shall be perfectly happy." They were as you had desired; and yet you were not happy. When you were twenty-one, you said, "If, when I am twenty-five, I could have ten thousand dollars, I would not ask for any more;" and you got the ten thousand dollars; but the idea of being satisfied with that you laughed to scorn. When you were twenty-five, you said, "If at thirty I could only have such a position in a partnership, with such and such a name, I would be entirely satisfied;" and you got what you asked for; but it was nothing to you. Your ambition lay far beyond that. And through your whole life you have been shifting your ground, and have always been *going to be* happy, but have never been happy in the proportion in which your money has increased, nor in the proportion in which your intelligence has increased, nor in the proportion in which the amplitude of your life outwardly has increased.

Your table is better, your house is larger and finer, your furniture is richer, your place in society is carried up very much; and yet, you are not as happy as you used to be. And you are still going on in the same blindfolded way, and are determined to see if you can not heap up gold and silver, and outward honor, and get more happiness out of them.

Let me tell you, no man will be any happier in this world than that will make him which he has in himself. Not that I deny that external conditions have a great deal to do with it; but I hold that the prime condition of happiness consists in the soul that a man carries. If a man's mind is staid on God, if he believes in his own immortality, and if he knows that Christ loves him and has redeemed his soul, you might put him in a dungeon, and he would be happy. But if a man has no such support, and no such comfort, you might put him on a throne, and he could not be happy.

Now, what are your materials for happiness, young man? What have you in yourself that is competent to make you happy? Your happiness is all ambitiously marked out. It depends on external conditions. But these never did sprinkle joy on any man's blossoming soul. All happiness must come from within; from moral quality, and social quality, and spiritual quality—from the manhood that is in you. Where are your elements of happiness? How few such elements there are in most men! How many there are that are going into old age ransacked by selfishness, worn out by the appetites and passions, destroyed by the animal propensities! How many of you have used up all that was of any value in you, and are waiting for the sexton's shovel to cover you up and get you out of the way! How many men live their three score and ten years, and then die, and are buried, of whom it may be said that the clod over their head is worth more to the world than they were! O woeful life! O shameful life!—above all, when there stands waiting for them this life of the soul hidden with Christ in God.

To that I commend you—that which is your joy here, which will be your support in the hour of death, and which will be the sure foundation and condition of joy in immortality.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O LORD our God! thou art greater than that the earth can express thee. Thou fillest the spheres. Thy being is not known, nor can it be in any point of time. Though thou art surrounded by innumerable intelligences, not all that gaze and behold thee, taking in a conception of thee, can take in the whole of thine infinite and unfathomable being. And only canst thou be known in the successive evolutions and developments of the eternal world. For thou art such and so much, thou art so transcendent in the outreach of every one of thine attributes, that only when the soul grows to knowledge in its own essential stature, can it comprehend any thing more of thee. For thou art not as a thing that we look upon. Thou art one upon whom our being travels. Thou art one whom by searching we can not find out, nor know unto perfection. We rejoice that there is such amplitude; and though it leaves us in darkness or in twilight, we rejoice in the glory of the future. We rejoice also in the conception which it gives us of the richness and wonder of thine invitation. Thou art calling us to thee, and pronouncing us thy children; and thou art kindling in us the first faint yearnings of the filial heart. Thou art drawing us spiritually and inwardly unto thyself. We know not what all these foretokens mean; but that they prophesy coronation, we know. Yet, what is to be the fashion of that life, what is to be the nature of that soul, what we are to be in that other manhood, in that higher existence, it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. Here we are environed by outward influences—by matter; here we are fastened down to the globe on which we dwell, springing from out of it, and still cumbered with it, though striving to get free. We can not in these rude and earthly experiences find analogy, nor any thing to compass the truth of that glory which shall be revealed in us through Jesus Christ. And all the voices out of the invisible, all those words of strange and mysterious meaning which stand recorded in thy blessed word, fall upon our ear, but bring little to our moral sense—and yet, something. They kindle in us devout expectations; they awake in us earnest yearnings; they inspire us to turn from the things that men call great and good, and measure them with a new and higher measurement. We are learning by thy grace that our life consists not in the abundance of the things which we possess; and we are learning that not all of ourselves and of our own faculties are for us; that but a part of them work earthward, and but a part work heavenward. And we find, gradually, that among those things in us which are working toward the spiritual and the divine, there are finer and coarser workings; and that there are degrees of excellence even in the most excellent things. And we come to such a sense of all the ways in which we are growing, or may grow, that we have a sovereign contempt for what we are now in this fragmentary being. We long for a nobler manhood; but when we see what we have done toward it, we have but laid the foundations. There is no manhood into which we can enter as into a mansion, and dwell there. There is nothing perfected. We are full of strivings, and will be. We can not go back again. Having tasted the better, we can not be contented with the worse. Having known the power of the life to come, having known something of the intimacy and joy of thine interior love, how can we turn again to the beggarly elements of the world? It must needs be that we keep on, unless we forsake our own honor and dignity, and all that is true to us.

We must go on; and yet, going on is so full of dissatisfaction; so little do we build that is worth building; so much are our best efforts marred by the over-measuring ideal, that, every day when we have done the best, we bring back, oh! how little. And how imperfect that little!

O Lord our God! we do not desire to live content. We know that we must evermore groan and travail in these things. We thank thee for so many alleviating joys, and for so much joy as we have in outward life. We thank thee for such hope and expectation, and for such visions of blessedness, and for such intervals of twilight, as are given to us on our way home to heaven. But we seek a better city, and a nobler character, and a more blessed communion with thee. We know it can not be wrapped again in darkness until reason fail. It hath been disclosed. We clasp the precious secret. We are of God. We are going back to him, and shall yet stand arrayed like him, and not unworthily be called the sons of God. And we can not forget it. This thought dwells in us and overmeasures all other things.

O our Father! we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that this blessed thought of discontent—discontent with lower things, and aspiration toward things above and beyond—may dwell in us; that we may not slumber nor sleep; that we may not go into torpor.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may never die while yet alive and walking about, ghastly and useless. We beseech of thee, minister to our inward life by our outward doings. Make our outward life rich by the richness of this inward love. Pour thine own love into us. Every day rebuke us, that thou mayest make us better. Every day chide us, that we may see the beauty of thy returning smile. Every day smite us, if only then thou wilt caress us, and bring us into the sweet experience of thy bosom of love. O thou that hast loved the world! O thou that art the source of all love! grant, we beseech of thee, that we may be so sanctified in thee and to thee, that we may become more and more to each other, deeper, richer, stronger, and clasped firmer in all fidelities and affections.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless us in the service of the sanctuary to-day. Grant that the truth may be as bread to the hungry, and as water to the thirsty. Come thou thyself in the speaking of the truth; and may it be more to those that hear than it is in the speaking. Grant, we beseech of thee, that it may enter into all the passages of the soul, and that every one of us may hear an echoing; that every faculty, in its own separate language, may speak the same thing to us in multiplied voices.

Let thy blessing rest upon all that are gathered together this morning, who come, if not with hands full of flowers to offer thee, yet with hearts full of gratitude, to render thanks to thee for thy sparing and restoring mercy. Accept their thanks, and abundantly bless them.

O Lord God! grant, we pray thee, that those who look upon great dangers passed away, and great fears that, like mighty storms, turn away, and pass by, and leave their bolts unsped, and who bring their sacred message, may be accepted, and that they may pour out their hearts of gratitude and of consecration.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be near to those who have come here to get strength, who are burdened, who have inward troubles, whose troubles have no name to them, and whose troubles are as birds of prey, flying hither and thither, and coming out unawares upon them. O Lord! thou canst brood and protect thine own. And as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, so canst thou those that put their trust in thee. We commend them to thy care. And may

those that are in darkness, and those that are suffering the pangs of bereavement, feel that Christ is very near to comfort them to-day—and never so near as when they are in darkness; never so near as when they seem to themselves to be emptied of joy; never so near as when they are most outcast and forlorn. May they find God a very present help in time of trouble.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all that are in the midst of life, bearing its cares, and bearing its burdens, and endeavoring to administer its responsibilities, so as best to serve God and man. Strengthen them in every generous and just purpose; and as their day is, so may their strength be also. We pray thee, that thou wilt teach men not so much to let alone the world, as to overcome it by right handling. And we pray that thou wilt grant them grace to walk in and out before thee in the discharge of secular duties, so as to make men praise God.

Bless this church, we beseech of thee, and all its members—those that are present with us, and those that are scattered abroad. Bless any that are upon the great deep; any that are in foreign lands; any that are in remote places of our own land. Be near to them, and grant that the Sabbath may rise with healing in its beams upon them to-day. And we beseech of thee that as there are thousands who turn back their loving thoughts to this place, and to the truth dispensed here, it may be to them as though they were here. May those thoughts bring down the blessings of God upon them.

Bless, we pray thee, every family. Enrich them more and more. Grant that they may be purer. May they be less and less worldly. May they have more and more of that divine and pure and noble life which shall make them households not far from the gate of heaven. And we beseech of thee, that thou wilt prepare us for the evils that are before us in life. We ask not that thou wilt ring the bell to warn where dangers are. We have committed ourselves to thee, and thou wilt take care of that. But we ask thee to disclose to us where are great joys. We shall find them when we come to thee. We ask thee that thou wilt ordain our way; that thou wilt give us every day contentment; that thou wilt every day give us faith which overcomes the world; that thou wilt every day give us what that day needs. May we not seek to prepare ourselves for future contingencies until they draw near to us. As thou hast ministered to us the grace that we needed at each particular exigency of life, so, living or dying, thou, O Shepherd! wilt prepare thy flock, and guide them. When a stream is to be forded, thou knowest it long before the flock, and thou wilt choose the hour and place, and be there to guide them in the waters. And grant, we beseech of thee, that we may every one feel, though we have wandered far, and though we be the children of Christian parents, and have forgotten their teachings, and have forgotten even the purity of our youth, and have cast aside the faith of our fathers, that we are not forgotten of thee, whom we forget; that we are not uncared for, though we are careless; that we are loved, though we no longer love thee.

We commend all to thy great and gracious heart, and pray that, living or dying, we may be still under thine immediate eye and care. And when peril, and task, and trial, and suffering, are all gone, and it is time for us to go, may we, better than birds, know the call from the winter and toward the south, know the meaning of this call heavenward, and spread our wings, and fly through all the way; and, hearing the sounds, and knowing the direction by the light and the blessed drawing thither, may we appear in Zion, and before God.

And to thy name shall be the praise of our salvation, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Amen.

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
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TO THE
Country Women
OF
AMERICA.

The following considerations concerning the

Dry Earth System

are respectfully submitted as worthy of their thoughtful attention.

Probably no single cause has had so much influence in producing the peculiarly delicate condition for which women living in the country, and in small towns in America, are notorious, as the discomfort, inconvenience, and frequent repulsiveness of their closet accommodations.

In towns which are supplied with water, and in those houses of the better class, which are furnished with water by private works, the use of the water-closet soon becomes universal, and its usefulness is at once recognized. But, probably, ninety-nine out of every hundred habitations in the whole country have nothing better than an unsightly privy, standing at some distance from the house—too often barbarously foul—and generally unapproachable except by an entirely unprotected walk, that is more or less exposed to public view, and, in wet or cold weather, is passable only at the risk of getting wet feet, dragging through wet grass or weeds, plodding through snow, or facing cold winds or storms.

As a natural consequence, delicate women soon school themselves to a postponement of the demands of nature, sometimes for days together, rather than expose themselves to the danger of taking cold, and to the certainty of great annoyance. Sometimes modesty, and sometimes the dread of discomfort and exposure, is the motive. In all cases the result is the same. The natural functions become disordered, the digestion is impaired, and dyspepsia, with its thousand and one horrors, breaks down the constitution, and lays the foundation for all manner of "female complaints."

It is unnecessary to enlarge on this subject. Every sensible woman, who has been subjected to the evil alluded to, must accept the foregoing statement of the case as a true one, and recognize the fact that any plan by which suitable accommodations can be provided **WITHIN THE HOUSE**, offers unspeakable relief.

In addition to this, women who have had the least experience in sick rooms, know that nothing connected with our lives is more horrible than the want of suitable accommodation for helpless invalids, (and this not even the **WATER-CLOSET** supplies)—horrible for the attendant and still more horrible for the invalid himself.

The most perfect relief in both cases is afforded by the use of the

EARTH CLOSET.

It is not worth while to discuss here the relative superiority of the Water-closet and the Earth closet; the only idea that it is sought now to enforce is that, by the aid of the latter, the well-known advantages of the former are placed within the reach of every person in the land.

By the simple use of **DRY EARTH**, in quantities that even the dust of a country road places within the reach of all, the waste of our bodies may be rendered immediately and permanently inodorous. It matters little (except for the question of convenience) what means are adopted for applying the earth—a barrel in the cellar with a seat over it, and a box of dry earth beside it; paper bags of earth to be used in connection with any suitable vessel; any arrangement, in fact, by which the feces may be covered with earth will amply suffice, and the necessity either for going to a distant building or of creating an offense in the house is entirely removed. The requirements of the laws of health may be fully met without fear of exposure to danger, inconvenience, or annoyance.

It is chiefly important:

1. That the earth be not too sandy—any fertile soil will do.
2. That it be dried, (and this may be done in the sun.)
3. That it be sifted (at least through a coal sifter.)
4. That the bottom of the vessel be first covered with earth to prevent adhesion: and
5. That enough earth (a pint or more) be thrown on the deposit to entirely cover it.

This is all. The deposits may accumulate in the house for a whole year, or they may be removed daily, as circumstances suggest. They will at no time be more offensive than so much earth from the garden.

For those who desire something more convenient and systematic than the plan suggested above, **COMMUNES** for private rooms and the **APPARATUS** for Privies may be cheaply obtained.

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